

NOTE
OF
AN ENGLISH REPUBLICAN
ON THE
MUSCOVITE CRUSADE.

BY
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

‘Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis
Tempus eget.’—VIRG. *Æn.* ii. 251.



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NOTE OF AN ENGLISH REPUBLICAN ON THE MUSCOVITE CRUSADE.

AMID and above the many voices now jangling around what is called the Eastern Question, the sound of one voice like the blast of a trumpet has at length rung its message in all English ears after a sufficiently well-known fashion to a sufficiently unmistakable purport. A preacher who defends the gallows, an apostle who approves the lash, has lifted up his voice against oppression, and has cursed 'the unspeakable Turk' by all his gods : in the name of Francia and in the name of Mouravieff the champion of Eyre Pasha in Jamaica has uttered his sonorous note of protest against the misdeeds of Achmet Aga in Bulgaria. For all sincere and lifelong admirers of the greatest English writer now living among us in an old age more peaceful though not more noble than was granted to the one Englishman we can remember yet greater in genius and in heart than he, it must be no small satisfaction, though it cannot but be no small surprise, to discover that there is actually

some limit, however indefinable, to Mr. Carlyle's admiration of the strongest hand. But why the single exception which is to prove the else universal rule should be that particular instance which apparently it is, we may surely be permitted in all loyalty and humility to inquire. What is the peculiar sanctifying quality in the Bulgarian which is to exempt him at need from the good offices of 'beneficent whip' and 'portable gallows,' as from things insupportable and maleficent to him alone of human kind? What tie can it be which binds together such allies as Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Carlyle on a question of political philanthropy? Misery, we all know, makes strange bedfellows; but there would seem to be sympathies, religious or political, which bring stranger matches about than ever were made by misery. Is it a common love of liberty which links the veteran of letters to the veteran of politics? In this very epistle published by the *Times* of November 28 we see that the new champion of oppressed Christendom cannot resist the overwhelming temptation to turn aside and spit on the very name of liberty—'divine freedom, &c.' His innate loathing of the mere word is too rabid and ungovernable an appetite to be suppressed or disguised for an instant. And yet it is not of conceding to their subjects too much of that mortal poison, of that damnable dissolvent, that the Turks now stand accused. Their Bashi-Bazouks are shamefully and incredibly maligned if they have earned no right to claim fellowship with the torturers, the hangmen, and the women-whippers of Hungary, of Poland, and of

Jamaica. What then can Mr. Carlyle see in them deserving thus far of his reprobation, or undeserving thus far of his applause? For we all remember what largesse of full-mouthed obloquy, what wealth of free-handed disdain, was lavished from a quarter so fruitful of perennial insult on the 'small loud group or knot of rabid Nigger-Philanthropists, barking furiously in the gutter,' and headed by John Stuart Mill, who ventured to question the excellence of such now discredited methods of government as were applied not long since to his victims by a satrap of English birth. It cannot be tyranny, it cannot be torture, it cannot be massacre to which Mr. Carlyle now objects. His daring has always [approved itself as great as even his genius, as unquestionable as even his honesty; but there is a point at which daring, like all other human qualities, loses its virtue and changes its likeness and foregoes its name. And the repudiation in any one case of a principle avowed as righteous and cherished as sacred in every case but one is usually and naturally considered as evidence of a quality which cannot accurately be defined as mere daring. We cannot therefore insult the great age and the great character of Mr. Carlyle by the supposition that he could now desire to come forward at the long last as a preacher of philanthropy or mercy, as a pleader for the laws of equity or the rights of man, as a champion of all things or of any one thing which it has been a main object of his lifelong energy to denounce alike in the rare moments of its triumph and through the

prolonged years of its defeat. For so much at least the sternest republican must concede to this illustrious enemy of all freedom ; that he has not hated it only when unsuccessful, nor reviled it only when out of fashion. Liberty and justice, equality and equity, fraternity and mercy, have had but few enemies in our day for whom as much can honestly be said. This credit is Mr. Carlyle's ; *hoc habeat secum, servetque sepulchro*. It is not only on truth in the hour of its overthrow that he has ever sought to set his heel. No man has a right to suspect him of even a partial or a passing apostasy from the great consistent principle of his prophecies and his gospel. He has always hated the very thought of liberty, abhorred the very notion of equality, abjured the very idea of fraternity, as he hates, abhors, and abjures them now. No man can doubt on which side or to what effect his potent voice would have been lifted at its utmost pitch before the throne of Herod or the judgment-seat of Pilate. No tetrarch or pro-consul, no Mouravieff or Eyre of them all, would have been swifter to inflict or louder to invoke the sentence of beneficent whip, the doom of beneficent gallows, on the communist and stump-orator of Nazareth. Had there but lived and written under the shadow of the not as yet divine emperor Tiberius, doubtless as ' strictly honest and just a man ' as any ' present Czar ' or emperor of his kind, a pamphleteer as eloquent and as ardent an imperialist as these pitiful times of ' ballot-box, divine freedom, &c.' have brought forth even ' in this distracted country,' what

a Latter-day Pamphlet on the Crucifixion, what an Occasional Discourse on the Nazarene Question, might we not now possess, whereby to lighten the darkness of history and adjust the balance of judgment! To the regretful disciple of Mr. Carlyle, considering duly of this matter, it must seem wellnigh as though nature were sparing of her greatest men at the right time, and again were lavish at the wrong. Happily, however, it can be no hard task, for any disciple that way given, to reconstruct in fancy from the many models before him the perfect scheme and argument of such possible pamphlet or discourse. For if ever a life was lived on earth, if ever a word was preached, if ever a death was died, most utterly in all points deserving of abhorrence from all who abhor the thought of freedom, of contempt from all who condemn the notion of equality, of hatred from all who hate the name of brotherhood, that life was assuredly the life, that word was the Gospel, that death was the death of Jesus. It cannot be therefore in his most undeserving name that we hear this protest on behalf of suffering Christians put forth by the worshipper of every gallows on earth but one—and that one the cross of Christ.

We may then presumably be permitted to dismiss without further discussion any possible theory of Christian sympathy with Christians on the part of a preacher to whom the spirit of every saying yet fathered on the Founder of Christianity should seem incomparably more hateful and contemptible than ever did the letter of any to Diderot or Voltaire. And with

it we may joyfully discard any possible apprehension of seeing a catechumen of his years and antecedents received at the eleventh hour into the fold or vineyard of the Eastern Church ; a sight which could be profitable for edification to no mortal. Is it then in the mere secular name of mercy or of chivalry, of decency or of manhood, that 'the unspeakable Turk should be immediately struck out of the question' to make room for the unspeakable Muscovite ? Nay, for very shame,—in Shakespeare's phrase, if aught so despicable as the phrase of a mere poet and player may here be cited without offence, 'for godly shame'—it cannot be on any such plea as this that the sympathy or the indignation of any creature is now invoked by the patron of Eyre Pasha, the champion of Mouravieff Bey. Not all Englishmen have yet forgotten the horror of shame, the sickness of disgust, with which they learnt how the accomplices and the satellites of the former had devised and carried out such ultra-Bulgarian atrocities as the stripping and whipping of women by men in public with scourges of 'pianoforte wire.' It was the infliction of such tortures and such outrages as these by English Bashi-Bazouks, that set those to whom the honour of humanity and of England was more than a mockery and a byword 'barking furiously in the gutter' under the guidance of the best and wisest among English philosophers and statesmen ; and this also it was which evoked the vociferous acclamations and inflamed the tempestuous applause of Mr. Carlyle and his tail. We must not therefore

now insult him by the imputation of a tardy apostasy from the persistent principles of his life. We must not assume that some afterthought has brought over from the natural side of his sympathy and his service a pervert so illustrious as the prophet who long since denounced 'the soft quality of mercy' as 'thrice accursed' in all cases where it was not 'permissible,' and who in the same breath referred the question of when and where, if ever, it might be, to the ultimate and indisputable decision of a drunken murderer and of a whipper of women. Nor, again, unless the meaning of words can be juggled into its exact reverse by the most able and audacious of special pleaders, can it be out of respect for 'the hard quality of justice' that the adoring biographer of Frederic William would imprecate our execration on the Turk. For in this very instance of judicial murder he admits, with quaint and admirable candour, that the royal hangman was indeed a mere assassin of the innocent, his 'poor old' victim being afterwards proved to have been wholly and demonstrably, morally and legally, guiltless of the charge on which he was murdered. Really it grows more and more difficult for the sharpest eye of the most devout disciple to detect whereabouts in the prophetic mind of the North British evangelist he may discern the exact point at which tyranny or cruelty, torture or murder, violence or injustice, ceases to be something admirable and is transmuted as by witchcraft into something unspeakable. Cruelty in Ireland, cruelty in Jamaica, cruelty in the plantation, cruelty in the jail, each of these in

turn has naturally provoked the stigmatic brand of his approbation, each in turn has deservedly incurred the indelible condemnation of his praise.

Is it then to the anarchy, the lack of 'rhythmic drill,' the prevalence of democratic principles and the insurrection of republican ideas, that he objects as to a dominant and perceptible element of evil and of danger among the soldiers of the unspeakable Turk? But never, if we may take the word of all who have fought beside and all who have fought against them, were there better soldiers upon earth; never men more loyal to their flag, more patient and faithful and laborious, more impermeable in wartime to any breath of insubordination, more impenetrable on campaign by any suggestion of revolt; no, not among the Bashi-Bazouks let loose by a strictly honest Czar on Khiva or Poland or Circassia. That unlucky word 'honest,' I may remark by the way, has always, when applied to emperors or kings, a perilous tendency to remind his idle admirers with which in particular among all the fantastic creatures of his unprofitable brain this especial epithet was associated by the author of Othello.

It could not be therefore because the Turk is cruel, though he were seventy times seven times as cruel as he is—it cannot be because he is insubordinate in wartime, for insubordinate in war time he is not—that we are invited on such authority as this to gather grapes of Russian thorns or figs of Slavistic thistles. It is simply, to all appearance, because the Russians 'in our own time have done signal service to God and man in drilling into order

and peace anarchic populations all over their side of the world.' To what manner of God and what type of man, if there be any reader that remembers not, yet Hungary remembers and Poland knows ; to the God of the worshippers of Moloch, and to men of the kindred of his priests. But in this case, when 'the Czar, whose serious task it is to protect the Christian subjects in Turkey proper,' shall practically have established his most righteous 'claim to territorial footing in the recovered country,' then 'the peaceful Mongol inhabitants' will 'of course be left in peace, and treated with perfect equity, and even friendly consideration.' Of course they will : about this at least there can be no debate possible among honest men—men as strictly 'honest and just, who have such noble sense of their friends' wrongs,' as even Czar Alexander and Ancient Iago themselves. The man who could doubt this might be capable of doubting the sacred word of an emperor or the plighted honour of a king. Seriously let me ask, for what imaginable or imaginary class of readers can such a sentence as this be written? Mr. Carlyle has shewn himself always the greatest and sometimes the uncleanliest of all great English humourists since Swift ; but the gravely indecent irony of this hideous jest might have disconcerted Aristophanes and made Rabelais think twice.

If then we are to cast in our lot on either side in this proposed crusade, we need surely to consider the blazon on the shield of its leader, the watchword on its preacher's lips. It is certainly not from the very humblest follower or obscurest private in the

republican camp of Europe that any word of protest should now or ever be expected against the heading of a forlorn hope, the preaching of a sacred war, the undertaking of a Quixotic enterprise. But even such an one may be permitted to enter his poor protest against the claims of a crusade which has Alexander of Russia for its Godfrey of Bouillon, and Thomas Carlyle for its Peter the Hermit. Even 'a rascally yea forsooth knave,' like the mercer who had the honour of supplying the sartorial needs of Sir John Falstaff, when that gallant gentleman would fain have been able to subscribe himself *resartus*, had apparently some right and some reason on his side in desiring that the knight 'should procure him better assurance than Bardolph.' I am of one mind in this matter with the worthy Master Dumbledon : I will not take the Czar's bond and his prophet's ; I like not the security. Even the patronage of Mistress Tearsheet, I remember, was not ultimately sufficient of itself to vindicate the fair fame of Hostess Quickly's establishment from the suspicions and imputations of evil-minded men : and neither the prophet nor the Czar, to say the very least and speak with all due reverence, has in any matter of politics more than character enough for himself : it would be well indeed if both between them had enough or but half enough for one. What moves the second Godfrey to his chivalrous emprise we know ; but would fain know likewise what it may be that now has touched the lips of our latter-day Peter as with a coal of fire from the altar. Some-

thing there must be in those south-eastern populations of Europe which has power to excite sympathy and pity where they never were enkindled before.* Nations and hosts enough of gallant and righteous and blameless men during the justly honoured length of Mr. Carlyle's lifetime have fought and suffered for the right; have given all that man could give for it, dared all that man could dare, done all that man could do, borne all that man could suffer. Yet he who has now so many words and so loud to speak on behalf of Bulgaria had never a word of help, had never a word but of scorn, for Paris or for Hungary or for Poland; for Italy he never had a word. That nation or that province, were it never so abject or so wretched, should be proud for once and happy, which has kindled in the spirit of a man so famous and so strangely strong of heart its one solitary spark of impersonal compassion; if

* I cannot help remarking for yet another example that it is at least amusing to find, as on December 4th in Birmingham, (for the first time, so to speak, of his appearance in such a part on any boards) John Bright applauding the policy of Richard Plantagenet and crusaders in general with all the incomparable vigour of his tongue. 'Perish Savoy' by all means, but long live Bulgaria! There is at last perceptible one singular and solitary bond of sympathy or union between the two living Englishmen of high genius and noble character—our greatest speaker and our greatest writer (of whom, by the way, the latter has ere now, in his abhorrence of all talk, proposed in the interests of genuine work and sound philanthropy to cut out at birth all the tongues of some 'one blessed generation')—whose else widely divergent views of national policy with regard to all questions of alliance or fellow-feeling with other nations must be, to speak out the pure plain truth, equally and otherwise incomparably detestable to those in whose political creed I put my only faith and hope on any point of national honour or international action.

at least it be matter for happiness or pride to have moved for the first time, and probably for the last, a great man's heart, which (how wide and warm soever it might lie open to its several friends) was barred and locked and straitened and frozen as with threefold ice or triple steel against every touch of the passion for humanity, every breath of the suffering with all unknown who suffer in the world, which binds together all great men of whose genius is akin to loving-kindness and twinborn with mercy, from Jesus even onwards to Mazzini, and from Shelley even backwards to St. John.

Such other men as these we have had with us, and one at least of the mightiest and most beneficent among them abides on earth even to this day. In writing these words I have written as it were at full length the name of Victor Hugo. The one living man of genius in all ways unquestionably and immeasurably greater than Mr. Carlyle's is also the one living man who above all others has a right to speak in the name of *mercy*, which our greatest man of genius has perpetually denounced in his capacity as politician, of justice which in his capacity as historian he has occasionally defied. It is not with hands yet hot from applauding atrocities in the West that our living lord of song would point men's attention towards atrocities in the East ; it is not with a tongue yet quivering from the praises of tyranny in the North that he would invoke men's indignation upon tyranny in the South. He did not watch with pleased indifference or tacit assent the assassination of Hungary by

Russia, the murder of Rome by France.* If he should now speak on this matter, it would be that he has some right to speak ; and if we should give ear to him, it would be that we have some reason. Not from his mouth of gold need we fear to receive a message that would bid us cast out the devils of Ottoman misrule by the Muscovite Beelzebub, the prince of the devils of despotism. There are yet men who have a right—though, alas, there may now be no nation which can claim it—to speak without rebuke words of justice and of mercy, to be heard without reminder or appeal. But not of these, unhappily and shamefully for us all, is the first living writer of England. The best comfort we can take in this evil case is to remember that the same charge cannot be

* Witness to all time, for one singly sufficient instance among ten thousand, these words of most bitter and imperishable sweetness :—

Et ces deux sœurs, hélas ! nos mères toutes deux,
Rome qu'en pleurs je nomme,
Et la France sur qui, raffinement hideux,
Coule le sang de Rome !

Les Châtiments, v. 10. (Jersey, Jan. 1853.)

The villanous enterprise which replaced Pius IX. on the seat of Alexander VI. might surely, one would think, if anything could on earth, have provoked some indignant word of protest from the great Protestant historian who has inherited as by a right diviner than that of kings so much of the eloquence and the humour, the principles and the passions, of Knox ; but I have never heard that he found in the trumpet of his prophecy one note of inherited indignation to sound against the violator of all national and human right

Qui, pour la mettre en croix, livra, sbire cruel,
Rome républicaine à Rome catholique.

Ibid. vi. 11.

brought by the maddest among malignants against the first living writer of the world.

Time was when England herself might have claimed and approved her claim to this noblest of human rights: when to establish it she had but to speak as a Republic through the lips of a republican secretary of state, whose name in eternity was John Milton. 'Inutilité des poètes,' as the living master of them all has pertinently remarked. But the hard-working and high-minded biographer of our Protector can shew no sign or birthmark of spiritual kinship, as to her loftiest and most precious quality, with the England of that deathless day. All men know with what a noble love and reverence he has paid a good man's homage and done a great man's service to the memories and the names of John Knox and Oliver Cromwell. But no man who has eyes can doubt, and no man who has honesty can deny, that had he lived in such an age as theirs, his natural place, by every law of logic and of likelihood, would hardly have been found beside such men as these. For these in their time were the champions of change and progress, lovers of all the light then possible to them, men of revolution and advance towards new stages of thought and government; more helpful servants of freedom than they knew, and furtherers of a truth more fruitful than they conceived: but the place of a latter-day Puritan, how strong soever be his genius, would assuredly in their age have been a seat of state or office beside or beneath Archbishop Laud or Cardinal

Beaton. But the men of that old revolution, we shall be assured, were no mutinous anarchical conspirators, no blasphemous chaotic rioters, no fitting heads or members for such secret societies as were extinguished in Italy by the godlike advent and heroic genius of Mazzini, and as are alleged to be at this moment engaged in the sure and steady business of undermining all the huge honeycombed fabric of happy and holy Russia. And doubtless in very deed they were not; but surely in their time, on the lips of all men of order and all partisans of reaction, the very best of them and the very wisest was all this and much more. Again, Mr. Carlyle has assuredly never taken part with treason, never ranged himself on the side of a falsehood; the rascal who should assert it would lie like the dastard he must be. We may all of us for example thank heaven, if we will, that in any case the greatest among all our living writers is as wholly and as nobly pure as any republican in Europe from the scandal of having ever burnt so much as one grain of incense on the altars of Thersites Tyrannus, the misshapen counterfeit and misnamed parodist as in burlesque of a mightier malefactor, the one anarch of our time who might most properly have echoed the proud vaunt of his bestial brother in Shakespeare — ‘I am a bastard begot, bastard instructed, bastard in mind, bastard in valour, in everything illegitimate;’ Judas on the throne of Nero, Perinet Leclerc in the saddle of Jeanne Darc as saviour of French society and Messiah of Parisian order. But not one of us

can reasonably say that Mr. Carlyle has even as fair a claim to speak against any wrongdoing in the world as either of his momentary colleagues, Mr. Freeman and Mr. Gladstone. History will perhaps account it the purest and most memorable right of the last-named statesman to aught of high or honourable remembrance, that he was once the champion of Pœrio in his years of martyr's agony, and the scourger of Ferdinand II. in his devil's hour of good fortune. I shall not be suspected by any man, and by no honest man shall I be accused, of preference for Mohammedan rather than Christian cruelties, of more tenderness for Eastern than for Western tyranny. I see nothing holier in a Sultan than in a Czar, in the wane of the now misnamed crescent than in the advance of the heavy and homicidal cross which has been laid too hard already on too many a tribe and nation; but if we were compelled to choose between a waxing and a waning evil, between a tyranny which at its utmost can but cling to the fast narrowing limits of its possible power and a tyranny which in the fullness of its triumph would threaten the very light and life of liberty and of justice, of righteousness and of reason upon earth—in that case I confess myself unable to understand how any but the lovers of darkness could bid us cast in our lot with the stronger. Anarchy on the verge of dissolution,—and such an anarchy, we are assured on all hands, is the existing empire of the Turk—however horrible may be the evils wrought and the agonies inflicted by the death-struggle and fierce convulsions of its own, is impotent.

or beneficent by comparison with an organised and militant anarchy like that of Russia. The worst accusation, indeed, which can be brought against such a despotism as the former, is that it naturally prepares a way for the coming of a more incurable and ineradicable evil in the impending advent of the latter. There can be no anarchy comparable for its power of maleficence to that of a nominally monarchical government in which the despot's hand, even while it grasps the helm, is fettered like any galley-slave's in a convict gang by the fitful good will and the perilous good pleasure of a multitude which having no liberty to do right, and no grace whereby to govern or to guide itself, must inevitably have in their stead a vague vast power to do evil, and a license of incalculable and lawless force wherewith to misguide and to misgovern the policy of a master who is the veriest bondman of them all.

Such axioms or reflections as these, we may be reminded, are stuff for a schoolboy's theme : but the stalest and most threadbare of all truths is surely more profitable for consideration than the brightest brandnew error or sophism in the world. And this is the one possibly not inadequate excuse for a too surely inadequate attempt to transcribe or to reassert what would seem to be the very rudiments of the instant question at issue. If our teachers of the moment invite us now to renounce or to reverse them, the humblest hearer on the lowest form of all has some right respectfully to ask and examine for himself what probable ground there may be to warrant

his reliance on such an invitation. Like Euclio, but with more bated breath and whispering humbleness, he will ask for a look at the hands which are put forth to point out the new letters of his unfamiliar lesson ; and in some cases it may perhaps be pardonable if he should even add with the bewildered and agonised miser of the grand rough old comedy, 'Show the third hand too.' There might haply be more of rational meaning and sound sense than would at once appear under the seeming distraction of such a hopeless and delirious form of demand. The men who ridicule the vanity and imbecility of Russophobia may chance to remind him of the men who denounce the oppressive and ill-grounded principle of compulsory vaccination ; and if he happen to object to free-trade in Panslavism or small-pox or any such other contagion, he will hardly be inclined to take part as it were on trust with the advocates or the supporters of a society for the propagation and circulation of either or of any kindred disease in politics or in physics. If the hands be the hands of murder though the voice be the voice of mercy,—if the hands be the hands of Russia though the voice be the voice of deliverance,—he will, to borrow from the Master's lips a metaphor together with a counsel, have exactly as much reliance on the good intentions of a Czar as on the lachrymal gland of a crocodile.

But although, as we said just now, there may be no nation left in Europe, since the day and long before the day when Mr. Tennyson uttered on behalf of forsaken Poland the noble first war-note of youth

and gallant genius, clear and loud in heroic deprecation of all tacit compliance with the earliest wrongdoing of the present Czar's father—no nation which has not forfeited the truly divine right to lift up voice or hand on behalf of others as one pure alike of active and of passive complicity with evil and oppression, yet in wellnigh every nation and province there should be some relics at least of a party, some remnants at least of a church, whose prophets and apostles have bought this right, and the right to bequeath it to their disciples, with the travail and heavy labour of all their lives, as with a price and a ransom paid in bloody sweat and tears more bitter than very blood itself—

Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,
Or stones whose rates are either rich or poor
As fancy values them ;

not with these, nor yet only with prayer and fasting, the mere love-offering of preserved souls and such whose minds are dedicate to nothing temporal ; but with the sacrifice of a good fight fought, a great course finished, a high faith kept. And surely we also, in the old sacred words of the Christian apostle who spoke in his day on our side, on the side of a resistance to tyranny and evil yet wider and deeper and more practical, more literal at once and more significant as a symbol and example to all men, than ever the preacher or his hearers dreamed—surely we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses that it should be no groundless or unwarrantable hope if, knowing in what and in whom we have believed, we trust that now too the blood of as willing and as innumerable an army of martyrs

may not fail to be the seed of a juster and stronger and more reasonable faith, of a wider and higher and more imperishable church, than yet was ever founded by the passion and devotion of the single spirit of man. For lack of martyrs and confessors most assuredly we shall not fail. Cayenne, Lambessa, Ischia, Caserta, Spandau, Siberia, these are but the few first names that rise up as at random to remind us, within the memory of men who yet are not old, from how many a Golgotha the famous as the nameless recruits of their noble army have been led to bear their crosses up how many a Calvary. 'As the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.—And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of them,—of whom the world was not worthy,' and they gave their life for the world. For the world, we say, and not for any Czar or Kaiser; nor yet that evil might be cast out by evil, to make place for a third and more immedicable evil than itself. '*Credo in Revolutionem*,' said once in our time, and in more than questionable Latin, a more than questionable servant of democracy; the same half unprofitable man of a perilous and hard-mouthed genius, whom Victor Hugo, if I rightly remember, is reported to have sometime charged with 'carrying a dried toadskin in his pocket.' In a more significant variation of as famous a Catholic formula, we may perhaps more reasonably assert as a radical principle of a creed well tested by sore experience:—'*Extra Rempublicam nulla salus*.' We have had enough and too much

of imperial saviours, and of redeemers whose crosses were for any sufferer but themselves. We have had time enough and overmuch wherein to unlearn all belief in the tender mercies of the wicked, in the precious balms which break men's heads. We will invoke no Czar to deliver us or any man on earth by the memory of Peter the murderer of his son, of Catherine the murderess of her husband, of Alexander who was crowned and anointed by the grace and consecration of hands which had murdered his father. However 'good and even noble an element in Europe' may be the presence and influence of such a royal house, of such a House of Atreus as this, we will have none of its benefits. We have no need to inquire with Cassandra to what manner of threshold the Destroyer has led us as a guide, when we like her snuff up from within it the reeking savours of a slaughterhouse in which the internecine form of murder is by far the least criminal or horrible—if indeed it be not the one only tradition or heirloom of the family which cannot with any show of justice be called pernicious. Were we minded for once, in defiance alike of secular and of sacred warning, to put our trust at all in princes, we could hardly even so be mad enough to begin with such as these. And with these, and not with the Russian people as with an educated and adult nation of free and valiant and worthy men, men fit to grow up into citizens and unfit to be cut down into slaves—with these and with their hereditary policy it is, that in the names of justice which they know not and mercy which they abhor, in the

hope of what such men most dread, and for the love of all that they most hate, and for the sake of all that they most despise, we are counselled now to take hands in a good cause, and do what in us may lie to further the ends and to deepen the foundations and to strengthen the bulwarks and to widen the boundaries of their empire.

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